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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Germany (French Zone)

DATE:

SUBJECT

Christian Trade Union Movement in the Saar Territory

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DIST.

17 September 1947

PAGES

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SUPPLEMENT

ORIGIN

SOURCE

1. The Mine Workers Union, the strongest union group in the Saar Territory, is firmly opposed to annexation of the Saar by France, an attitude strengthened by the backing of its chairman Oskar Müller, a Communist. Governor Grandval sought to change the situation by prohibiting Müller from public speaking (March 1947), arresting him (18 April), and finally expelling him from the Saar (4 June 1947; he is now in Idar-Oberstein, Hauptstrasse 454). In spite of this, the Mine Workers Union maintained its non-annexation views.
2. About 15 June 1947, Grandval tried a flanking attack by appealing to Johannes Hoffman, chairman of the Saar CDU, to break the mine workers' determination by forming a Christian Trade Union which would support annexation. Hoffman was dispatched to Paris to request permission for the new group and successfully arranged for it with Foreign Minister Bidault, without consulting the Ministry of Labor. Announcement of the new project was withheld at Hoffman's suggestion until he could discuss it at the party convention on 27 July 1947; he affirmed that it would be enthusiastically approved.
3. When Hoffman announced the project at his party convention, however, such a storm of protest resulted that he had to remove the matter from the agenda. Grandval, meanwhile, on the preceding day, 26 July 1947, had already notified the Board of Directors of the Unity Trade Union (Einheitsgewerkschaft) that he had allowed the formation of Christian Trade Unions.
4. On 3 August 1947, the Unity Trade Union organized a public protest meeting in Saarbrücken against the Christian Trade Unions, at which most of the speakers were Catholic trade unionists. Over 3000 persons attended. The assembly adopted a resolution authorizing the Board of Directors of the Unity Trade Union to protest to the French government, the Control Council, and the

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World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) against the schism of Saar trade unions advocated by the Christliche Volkspartei but rejected by the Saar mine workers.

5. Grandval and Hoffman had hoped for the support of Heinrich Wacker, first chairman of the Unity Trade Union, because of his ardent pro-annexation and anti-Communist sympathies. The miners' reaction was so strong, however, that he did not dare state his own opinion but came out against the formation of a Christian Trade Union. Because of the ambiguous position in which this leaves him, Wacker is expected to retire from his trade union post, upon Grandval's recommendation, and accept a leading position in Saar industry.

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